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COMMENT AND CONJECTURE ON ANCIENT RELIGION

Ancient Religion and the Quest for Security (*Krauss*) ; Euclid and Pythagoras (*Gould*) ; Sanctity of the Cabbage (*Riess*) ; Anabasis and Katabasis in Eleusis (*Zachariades*) ; Baltic Religion (*Gray*) ; Proteus Is a Dancer (*Lawler*)

REVIEWS

MYLONAS, Hymn to Demeter and Her Sanctuary at Eleusis (*Carpenter*) ; FORBES, Teachers' Pay in Ancient Greece (*Kirtland*) ; FLETCHER, Virgil, Aeneid VI (*MacDonald*)

ABSTRACTS OF ARTICLES

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COMING ATTRACTIONS

JANUARY 13 Bryn Mawr College

Illustrated Public Lecture by Dr. E. A. Lowe of The Institute for Advanced Study: Roman culture before and after the Carolingian reform, as reflected in Latin manuscripts

Officers: Russell F. Stryker, College of the City of New York; Paul Culley, New York University; Dr. Thelma B. DeGraff, Hunter College High School; Miss Margaret J. McKelvie, Tilden High School

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Circulars of information and application forms may be obtained from the Executive Secretary, American Academy in Rome, 101 Park Avenue, New York City.

FEBRUARY 6 Barnard College

NEW YORK CLASSICAL CLUB

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Vassar College

Topic: A Greek Romance

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COMMENT AND CONJECTURE ON ANCIENT RELIGION

Ancient Religion and the Quest for Security

Fear is universally recognized as one of the most genuine and compelling instincts of the higher forms of animal life. Fear is aroused in man by the prospect of losing what one has become accustomed to cherish or what one naturally loves: possessions, position, friends, physical well-being and, above all, life itself.

An abundance of evidence points clearly to the fact that the primitive mind is dominated by fear, and that primitive society is rigidly controlled by taboo, a code of fear. Before man recognized the advantages of social organization, his survival depended largely on his own individual resources. But as the community and the tribe develop, the collective distinctions between helpful and harmful, good and evil forces are reduced to formulae which constitute the basis of the *modus operandi* of primitive society.

Thus, primitive man formally acknowledges that he is surrounded by forces great and small, seen and unseen, which from near or far contribute to or detract from his security. His daily and seasonal fears of the impulsive action of the harmful forces and of the interruption of the beneficent influence of the helpful forces prompt him to create the office of the magician. Those acts of his, whether individual or communal, are *right* and those are *wrong* which respectively do or do not conform to the instructions of this elementary priest. The approach of primitive man to the natural world, therefore, reaches its highest expression in magic.

The details of man's gradual transition from magic to religion are too intricate and varied to be examined here. Obviously, his nascent mind eventually recognized the inefficacy of magical rites to control the operation of natural forces and impelled him to search for a more direct means of dispelling his fears. By disassociating natural forces from the objects and spheres in which they manifested themselves, by attributing to them not only intelligence and personality, but also human form and emotions, and by endowing them with supreme power over the objects and spheres from which they were disassociated, man developed more or less refined concepts of deity.

This transition from animism to polytheism reflects a profound change in man's attitude toward Nature. The activity of natural forces is now interpreted as the expression of the will of a group of primary divinities who rule as supreme arbiters in the departmentalized affairs of gods and of men. Accordingly, man's personal welfare, and that of the community, tribe and State, depends directly on the cultivation and maintenance of the good will of these accessible deities and on the avoidance and placation of their ill will. The cults and ceremonies that are necessary to achieve these ends are formulated by priests who serve as intermediaries be-

tween man and deity. The actual accomplishment of these ends is contingent, however, on the proper observation of cult and the proper performance of ceremony, either by the priests themselves or under their direction. In this way, the hollow mummery of magic yields to the awesome solemnities of religion.

In this brief and generalized account of the development of religious concepts, we recognize the traditional features of Greek and of Roman religion. We know that through the enlargement of the pantheon of divine beings and through the multiplication and elaboration of cults and ceremonies both Greek and Roman religion became burdensomely specific and specious. This tendency in Greek religion, however, was ultimately challenged and somewhat arrested by the rise of philosophic thought. The Greek philosophers progressively concerned themselves with the dual problem of reducing the world to a rational system and of resting this system on the facts established by empirical inquiry. As a result, they elevated Greek religion to an intellectual plane by exposing the puerile concepts underlying the mythological representations of the Olympian deities, and by imposing on these divinities the necessity of rational motivation and of moral conduct within the framework of a universe operating under natural law. By defining more clearly man's relationship to the gods, to the natural world, and to society, they clarified the motives and simplified the methods by which man could and should aspire to a reasonable life: a life devoid of debasing fear of the supernatural and superior to human and divine censure. Thus, in the advanced systems of Greek philosophy, ceremonial polytheism as an approach to Nature was subordinated to rationalism and empiricism, that is, to the reasoned conclusions of scientific investigation.

Roman religion, on the other hand, stopped short of such intellectual refinement. The explanation of this fact is to be found in the Roman temperament itself and in the circumstances created by Rome's rapid rise after the Second Punic War to the rulership of the Mediterranean World. The strongly legalistic cast of the Roman mind made cult and ceremony represent the statutory expression of the interactive obligations of gods and men. The 'vir religiosus' was he who showed an awesome fear of the gods by fulfilling his obligations to them through cult and ceremony.

Confined to this pragmatic mold, Roman religion of the Republic would doubtless have continued in its development as a slow amalgamation of the religious concepts of the more advanced peoples of the Italian peninsula. But the successful outcome of Rome's inevitable collision with Carthage catapulted her into the position of a world power, and induced a succession of military campaigns that extended her frontiers to Greece, Asia

Minor, Syria and Egypt. Since a polytheistic religion cannot deny the valid claims of foreign deities for recognition, it was impossible for Roman religion to expand into a religion of the Empire or to resist the steady infiltration of cults and philosophic theories that were alien to the Roman heart and mind. Confused within and buffeted from without by these conflicting concepts, it lost its determinate hold on the religious beliefs of the Roman populace. Yet, when it finally succumbed to the spiritual teachings of Christianity, it asserted its true nature by imposing on these a wealth of traditionally Roman cult and ceremony.

FRANKLIN B. KRAUSS

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Euclid and Pythagoras

There is divinity in odd numbers.—Sir John Falstaff

"There is luck in odd numbers." This saying, considered as superstition by some and as religious dogma by others, has had a long history in many different nations. It was current among the Greeks; Vergil quotes it in his Eclogues (8.76): *numero deus impare gaudet*. Our own language offers many examples, like this engaging quatrain from the Irish novelist, Samuel Lover:

"Now, Rory, leave off, sir; you'll hug me no more;
That's eight times to-day that you've kissed me before."
"Then here goes another," says he, "to make sure,
For there's luck in odd numbers," says Rory O'More.

Light is thrown on the explanation of this belief by a study of the relation between Euclid and Pythagoras. The contents of Euclid's Elements were determined to a great extent by the mathematical discoveries of Pythagoras and his school. Proclus goes so far as to say that Euclid's whole thirteen books were devoted to explaining the five "divine solids of Plato," first investigated by Pythagoras. But this is a one-sided view of the relation between the two men. The Elements contain a great deal beside solid geometry. Books VII, VIII and IX deal with the theory of numbers considered as falling into two classes, the prime numbers, 2, 3, 5, 7, 11 . . . which are not the product of other numbers, and the composite numbers, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10 . . . each of which is divisible by one or more primes. The question arises whether the list of prime numbers ever comes to an end. Are there infinitely many primes or is one of them bigger than all the others? Theorem 20, Book IX, proves that no matter how far we go along the list of primes, there still remain others. There is no biggest prime. For if there were, the absurd result would follow that we could find a composite number not divisible by any prime! To find such a number we would need only to multiply together all the primes up to and including our biggest prime and add to this result the number one. The large number so obtained would be composite, since larger than the biggest prime, and not divisible by

any prime since, whenever we tried to divide it by a prime, we would get a remainder of one. This important theorem has always been held in honor by mathematicians. Let us for our part try to see its connections with the religious doctrines of the Pythagoreans.

One of the most noticeable features of these doctrines is the emphasis laid upon the fact that every number is either even or odd (see, e.g., Aristotle, *Metaph.* 1.5.986a 17; *τοῦ δὲ ἀριθμοῦ στοιχεῖα τὸ τε ἄρτιον καὶ τὸ περιττόν*). Pythagoras asserted, moreover, that the odd numbers are superior to the even ones (e.g. *Ps. Plut.* v. *Hom.* 145: *τῶν ἐφεξῆς ἀριθμῶν τὸν μὲν ἄρτιον ἐνδεῖ καὶ ἀτελῆ, τὸν δὲ περισσὸν πλήρη τε καὶ τέλειον*) and he explained this assertion by saying that odd numbers do not allow themselves to be divided into two equal parts (*ibid.*: *διαιρεσίν οὐκ ἐπιδέχεται*). It is clear that his belief in the superiority of odd numbers must have its roots deep in human nature, for it has been held by different races over the face of the globe. And we shall see that he has given it the right explanation.

If odd numbers owe their superior qualities to the fact that they cannot be divided into two equal parts then the prime numbers must enjoy a very great superiority, since they do not allow division of any kind. Pythagoras used to represent a number with a row of dots and then experiment with the ways in which these dots could be rearranged to form a rectangle. He was much impressed by the distinctive character of any row which represented a prime number; it could not be formed into a rectangle at all. In a usually misunderstood passage of the *Metaphysics*, Aristotle mentions the importance which Pythagoras attached to the fact that every number except the primes could be formed as the product of two numbers. The odd numbers are better than the even numbers because they are not divisible by two; the prime numbers are the best or "oddest" of all, because they are not divisible by any number.

Beyond comparison, the most "sacred" of all the prime numbers is seven. To what does this number owe its peculiar position? What religious experience led the Hebrew people to the feeling that it is good to rest one day in seven rather than one in eight or six? An explanation for the Pythagorean worship of the number seven is given by Philolaus, a contemporary of Plato. His answer is of interest to us since our week still has seven days; there can be no doubt that it gives an accurate and complete explanation. He says that seven is the most sacred number because it is the largest prime number less than ten (see, e.g., *Joannes Lydus, De Mens.* ii.11, p. 72). It is natural to take ten as a limit since, having ten fingers, we count up to ten and then begin over again (cf. *ἐνδεκά, δώδεκα* etc.), while the importance of having a prime can be seen in the following way. Suppose that our week had not seven days but six. Then the impressiveness to our minds of the first

or holy day would be lessened by its having a rival, so to speak, in the fourth day, seeing that each of them would stand at the beginning of a half week of three days. The same trait of the human mind can be observed in music. In three-quarter time the first of the three notes in a bar is the only one to receive an accent; but in six-eight time the fourth note also receives some accent because of an inevitable though perhaps subconscious realization on the part of both performer and listener that it stands at the beginning of the second half-bar. In a week of six days the unavoidable singling out of the fourth day would give it a psychological importance which would detract in an undesirable way from the commanding position of the first or holy day. The number of minutes in an hour is sixty, a number chosen simply because it is far from being prime, seeing that a half-hour, a quarter-hour, etc. all contain an exact number of minutes. But if the beginning of a new hour had the same religious significance as the beginning of a new week, its importance on the face of the clock would be detracted from by the presence of certain other periods which naturally stand out above the rest, namely the half-hour and the quarter-hours.

It was because Pythagoras was interested in questions like these that the Greek mathematicians invented those theorems about the divisibility of numbers which make up Books VII, VIII and IX of Euclid's Elements. In the theorem quoted above, about the infinitude of the number of primes, mathematicians have always recognized a cornerstone of the theory of numbers, a stone on which they have erected a magnificent edifice devoted to the theory of distribution of primes. But from our point of view, as students of Greek religion, we may also honor this theorem as the one in which Euclid proves that God has created an inexhaustible supply of the best, the most divine, the "oddest" of all numbers, the primes.

S. H. GOULD

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The Sanctity of the Cabbage

The fragment of Hippoanax 37D=40B is generally considered obscure and difficult. Athenaeus (9.370) quotes our passage as well as the fg. Ananaios 3D=4B as evidence for the holiness of the plant, of which no doubt seems possible. In the same place Athenaeus states that cabbage was used (the expression *παρεσκευάζετο* means 'was cooked') to protect lying-in women against witchcraft. In the Hippoanax passage the sanctity appears to be reenforced by the *seven* leaves of the plant, for which, however, I can find no botanical evidence (cf. W. Roscher, SAWA 1906, 41). The difficulty of the fragment lies in lines 2 and 3: *ἡ θύεικε Πανδώρη* (Schwenn RGVV XV 36.5 reads

Πανδώρη without explanation, perhaps because he identified Pandora with Anesidora the earth goddess) *θαρυγλίουσιν ἔγχυτον πρὸ φαρμακοῦ*. The question is whether Pandora sacrifices 'enchyton,' a decoction or soft cake: the word seems to be used only as an adjective; it could here be an adverbial accusative or it may be used as a noun. Thus the dative *ἡ* would be instrumental. But in that case it is hard to understand why the escaping culprit (?) or lover (?) should seek refuge with or implore the plant itself. It seems better, then, to take *ἡ* as the indirect object of *θύεικε* (note the iterative), so that Pandora (a hetaira? The name is not listed in RE 8 s.v. *Hetairai*) offers a libation to the plant itself. Have we here a survival of the tree and plant cult? That Ananaios swears by the cabbage might support this view, were it not for the fact that we know of the euphemistic substitution of animate and inanimate objects for the name of a god.

ERNST RIESS

SCARSDALE, NEW YORK

The Anabasis and Katabasis in Eleusis

The Eleusinian festivals, celebrated in the days of Athenian greatness in honor of Demeter and Persephone, were held in Eleusis, a town of Attica not far from Athens. These rites, according to different authors in classical times and in the Christian era, had great influence on the religion of the ancient world.

Clement of Alexandria, the most authoritative critic of this cult, called the Eleusinian mysteries a mystical drama. Some hostile writers have suggested that the mysteries were a dramatic representation of the experiences of Persephone and Demeter, showing their passage through Hades and the coming of a new birth and a new order. The Homeric Hymn to Demeter is the ancient evidence of this belief and this gives only a part of the story, and that part elaborated and adorned with poetic ornament. We must supplement the Hymn from other sources and then separate the essential parts of the myth, which are likely to be just those in which we can detect the symbolic language.

The celebration did not take place entirely in Eleusis, but Athens was the starting-point. Every year there were two celebrations, the Greater Eleusinia, the Katabasis, celebrated in the autumn, and the Lesser Eleusinia, the Anabasis, celebrated in the spring at Agrae on the banks of the Ilissus.

The Lesser Mysteries and the Greater had many points of similarity, even though the Lesser Mysteries were considered only as a prelude to the Greater (Scholiast on Aristophanes, Plut. 849: *ἔστι τὰ μικρά ὥσπερ προκάθαρσις καὶ προάγνενος τῶν μεγάλων*). The Lesser Mysteries were presented on a much smaller scale, but initiation in the Lesser was generally required before the candidate could present himself for initiation into

the Greater. Those initiated into the Lesser Mysteries bore the name of mystae and they had to wait some time before they could be admitted to the Greater Mysteries. According to some accounts the Lesser Mysteries related to Core and Dionysus, while the Greater were reserved for Demeter and her daughter.

At Eleusis there were temples to Artemis, Triptolemus and Poseidon, as well as that of Demeter; similarly at Agrae, there was a temple to Demeter, and altars to Artemis and Poseidon.

The mysteries at Agrae probably consisted largely of purifications for which the water of the Ilissus was used. They were held more especially in honor of Persephone than of Demeter. It appears that the carrying off of Persephone was the most important representation in these mysteries. A great many, especially strangers, were initiated into these mysteries, but did not proceed to initiation into the regular Eleusinia. According to legend, this was done to commemorate the special initiation of Heracles who was a stranger and who, according to the primitive regulations, could not be initiated into the Eleusinia. For him Lesser Mysteries were established. In character they were orgiastic and mimical and their celebration took place at night, particularly as it related to the worship of the dead.

In the celebration of the Greater Mysteries we have two important definite features which are fixed by evidence of authentic writers: "Αλαδε Μύσται" ('Mystae to the Sea') and the Iacchus Day. The other days of the celebration depend on conjecture and on the ability of the student of ancient religions to read and interpret the sources. In this celebration Demeter held the highest rank; but as the mother goddess was not unknown in the spring festival, so the daughter was not excluded from that of autumn. The abduction of Persephone and her descent into the infernal regions were commemorated together with the grief of Demeter as she sought her daughter.

There seem to have been two degrees of initiation into the Greater Mysteries, with an interval of at least a year between them. Corresponding to the successive stages there was no doubt a succession of rites and revelations tending towards an ideal of religious perfection, and those fully initiated were called *ἐπόπται*, 'overseers.'

Many other factors must be considered in the study of ancient religions, and especially in the study of those that played a part in the private, political, social and religious life of classical Greece. It must be confessed that the information we have concerning these Mysteries is scanty and related mainly to the externals of the celebration. What was shown and told during those nights at Eleusis is not clearly known to us. The oath of secrecy was well kept and the mystery has never been solved of what the ancient authors refused to

divulge. "It is not lawful," says the Homeric Hymn, "to mention the orgies which Demeter established." Pausanias writes that when he was about to narrate all things plainly, a vision in the night checked him.

One of the best ways to approach a study of the Mysteries is by examination of the words used regarding them, especially the technical terms. The names of the ministers of the rites, who, dressed in purple robes and wearing crowns of myrtle, chaste throughout their tenure of office, presided over initiations, are known especially through one passage (Scholiast on Sophocles, Oed. Col. 683): *ἱεροφάντης*, *δαδοῦχος*, *ἐπιμελητὴς τοῦ βωμοῦ*, and *ἱεροκήρυξ*.

The *ἄρχων βασιλεὺς* was a very important personage for those who wished to be initiated. He gave orders about the general procedure of the ceremony. It was the *μυσταγωγοί* who, after due examination of the applicant, returned his name to *ἄρχων βασιλεὺς*. The procedure was called *σύστασις*.

Terms used describe the course of the celebration too. On its first day the mystae assembled at Athens in the Eleusinion. This assembly is called by a suggestive name in Hesychius, *ἀγυρμός*. A proclamation ordered departure of all strangers and murderers. Then the order for purification was given.

On the second day the mystae went in solemn procession to the seashore, where baptism or purification took place. After this ceremony the mystae walked to Eleusis through the holy street, *ἱερά οδός*, says Pausanias (1.38.1). Scholiasts call this formal act *πρόρρησις*.

Little of the procedure of the third day is known with certainty. It was a day of fasting, and cakes of sesame and honey were taken in a frugal evening meal. On the fourth day there was a procession in which baskets were carried, each containing pomegranates and poppy seeds, cakes, salt and a serpent. Four white-maned steeds led and women followed the procession with small mystic cases in their hands.

The fifth day appears to have been a torch day because the mystae were led by *δαδοῦχος* when they went in the evening to the temple of Demeter in Eleusis. The name *τελεστήριον* has suggested to many scholars that in the enclosure of this temple was the spot at which Demeter was said to have rested in her wanderings and to have been advised by Hecate to consult Helios. In the name used by Strabo for the temple, *μυστικὸς στρόφις*, is again proof of its part in the rite.

The sixth day, called the Iacchus Day, was the most solemn of all. Again its character is well indicated by the name used for the place at which the procession halted, *ἱερὰ συκῆ*. Wooden images of Iacchus made from the fig tree, as well as baskets of figs, were carried in the procession. It was on the night following this that the mystae were led into the sanctuary and allowed to see what none ever described.

The nature of the seventh day is associated with a

bridge, as is shown by the name *Τεφυρισμός*. The initiated sat down to rest at a bridge and there indulged in the raillery and buffoonery known to be characteristic of this day.

The name given the eighth day, Epidauria, tells most of what is actually known of its nature. It was for those who had come too late or had been prevented from the general initiation. It was said to have been added when Asclepius, coming over from Epidaurus to be initiated, arrived too late. The name of Asclepius may hide the characterization of this day.

On the ninth and last day was held the feast called *πλημοχοαί* (Athenaeus 10.496), a sacrifice to the dead. The name is that of a broad-bottomed earthen jar. One such jar was filled with wine for the ceremony, another with water. This sacrifice formed a conclusion that the Athenians found fitting as the end of the festival. On that day were the *άγωνες σταθιακοί*, called Eleusinia or Demetria. Prizes at the games were barley.

In spite of the interpretation given *Τεφυρισμός* and *πλημοχοαί* many scholars think there was no *Κατάβασις* in a regular procession.

Whatever their nature, these Mysteries opened to many a comforting prospect of the future state. The idea is found in terms used for describing them, such words as *ἀναγέννησις* and *πίστις* and the contrast of *ἀνάστασις* and *θάνατος* in the epitaph of the hierophant who found that "death was not evil, but a blessing."

GEORGE ELIAS ZACHARIADES

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Baltic Religion

Chronologically, the pre-Christian religion of the Baltic peoples, the Lithuanians, the Letts, and the Old Prussians, can scarcely be termed "ancient," for our oldest records concerning it are not earlier than the first part of the fourteenth century. In spirit, however, it is "ancient" indeed, being, like the Lithuanian language itself—and, in lesser degree, Lettish and the extinct Old Prussian—highly archaic in type, a fact which is readily explicable in view of the isolation of the Baltic territory until the invasions of the Teutonic Knights in the thirteenth century. In his *Chronica terrae Prussiae* (1326), Peter of Dusburg gave a very generalised characterisation of the system:

Errando omnem creaturam pro deo coluerunt, scilicet solem, lunam et stellas, tonitrua, uolatilia, quadrupedia etiam, usque ad bufonem. habuerunt etiam lucos, campos et aquas sacras, sic quod secrate aut agros colere uel piscari ausi non fuerant in eisdem.

If this were all, Baltic religion would seem to be of relatively slight interest for the student of comparative religion; but, fortunately, much more detailed information is given by later sources. From these, supplemented by a number of minor records, we learn not merely the broad outlines of the religion, but also the names and

functions of a host of "special divinities" (Sondergötter), and it is precisely this information which makes the system of particular interest, since we here have a highly primitive type of religion which is directly comparable with the multitude of "special gods" in early Roman, Greek, and Iranian belief.¹ Of this host of Baltic "special deities"—Usener-Solmsen list about 170—only some of the most characteristic can be noted here. Of the house there were Dimstipatis, "House-Lord," corresponding to the Lettish Mājas Kungs; Apidome, "mutati domicili deus"; Dvargantis, "guardian of the estate"; and the Namiszki Dievai, "house-gods" in general. With the hearth were concerned Aspelenie, presiding over the corner between hearth and wall; Polengabia, goddess of the hearth-fire; and, especially, Ugnis Szentā, "Holy Fire"; and among the Letts Ugguns Māte, "Fire Mother," was the goddess of fire; while the Lithuanian Tartois Kibirksztu protected against sparks and conflagration. Alabathis was invoked by women about to spin; Dugnai "praeest farinae subactae"; Raugupatis presided over the brewing of beer, as did Ruggczus over fermentation generally; and Szlotrazys over the bathbroom. Fields were under the protection of Laukpatis, whose Lettish feminine counterpart was Laukamaat, "Field Mother"; fertility was the province of Waisgautis, and grain of Javīne; while Zelus presided over vegetation, Gabjauja over barns, and the Lettish Dārsa Māte was the "Garden Mother."

Domestic animals had special divinities—Ratainicza among the Lithuanians and Usching among the Letts for horses; Baubis for cattle generally among the Lithuanians, and Lopemaat among the Letts (who also had a special cow-divinity, Moschel); Gotha for the increase of cattle, and Gotui for small cattle; Karvaitis for calves; Eratinis for lambs; Kremata, Krukis and Priparszas for swine; Swieczpuncscynnis Dewos for domestic fowls, and Pesseias for their young; Babilos for bees among the Lithuanians and Bittes Māte among the Letts, with the Lithuanian Austheia for swarming bees and Prokorimos for honey. So, too, for trees: Girystis among the Lithuanians and Meschamaat among the Letts for the forest generally, with the Lettish Krūmu Māte for thickets; the Lithuanian Birzulis for the birch; Ganyklos for the willows; Lasdona for the hazel; and Szermuksnis for the mountain ash. For the Letts, water was under the jurisdiction of Udens Māte, and the sea was ruled by Jurasmaat; among the Lithuanians, Bangutys was the god of waves and storms, Upinnis Dewos

¹For the Baltic system see especially H. Usener, *Götternamen: Versuch einer Lehre von der religiösen Begriffsbildung*, Bonn 1896, with a list of the deities, 85-106; for the Roman, R. Peter, in W. H. Roscher's *Ausführliches Lexikon der griechischen und römischen Mythologie* ii, Leipzig 1894-7, 190-233; for the Greek, Usener, 122-77; for the Iranian, L. H. Gray, *Foundations of the Iranian Religions*, Bombay (1929), passim. Divergencies in the spelling of the names of the deities are due to the multiplicity of sources from which our material is drawn.

of rivers, Ezernim of lakes, and Szullinnis of springs; Wiejopatis was "lord of the winds" for the Lithuanians as Wejamaat was the Lettish "wind-mother"; the Lithuanian Audros ruled the storm wind, Blizgulis the snow, and Lituwanis the rain. Sailors and fishermen had a special deity in Gardoeten, and herdsmen in Szericzius; Bentis "efficit ut duo uel plures simul iter aliquo instittuant"; Keliu Dievas, like his Lettish feminine counterpart Zella Mâte, presided over roads and journeys; the Lithuanian Derfintos caused peace, and Ligiczu maintained it, while Zallus was the god of strife, and the Lettish Kurra Mâte and Ceroklis were deities of war and of hospitality respectively.

Our knowledge of the actual cult of these divinities is confined to the merest generalities in the early writers, who record but two brief myths, solar in character. It is only the *dâinos* (folksongs), which did not begin to receive true study until the first quarter of the nineteenth century, that give anything of true mythological value. Of these, I have written elsewhere:

Late as these *dâinos* are, the mythological material which they contain is very old, far antedating the introduction of Christianity and presenting a point of view prior to the thirteenth century; and though . . . certain Christian changes and substitutions have been made, these are not sufficient to cause serious confusion. Unfortunately our material is restricted to myths of the sun, moon, and stars, although surely there had once been myths of other natural phenomena, especially as we are told that when the Aurora Borealis appears, the Murgi or Iohdi (spirits of the air and souls of the dead) are battling, or that the souls of warriors are engaged in combat. It is inconceivable that, with the wealth of Baltic deities of very diverse functions, no myths were associated with at least some of them.²

Of Old Prussian religion we know practically nothing, since our chief informant, Simon Grunau, who wrote in the early part of the sixteenth century, is notoriously unreliable. In the Lettish pantheon, the predominance of "mothers" (Bittes Mâte, Laukamaat, etc.) is noteworthy, this possibly suggesting, like the analogous Gaulish "Matres," a survival from a pre-Indo-European period when a matriarchal system was the rule.

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Proteus Is a Dancer

In Lucian's treatise *On the Dance* (19) occurs a statement which I believe has not received the attention that it merits. "The ancient Egyptian Proteus," says Lucian, "is nothing but a dancer." He is as fluid as water, Lucian goes on, and as quick as fire. He portrays a lion, a panther, the branch of a tree, with superb mimetic artistry; and as the story of his skill is handed down, it becomes a tale of actual metamorphosis.

²Mythology of All Races, iii (Boston 1918), 319; cf. my chapter on "Baltic Mythology" *ibid.*, 317-30, and notes, 356-61; cf. also Plate xxxvii, *ibid.*, opposite 304; and, for the whole subject, Usener, 79-84, 109-15.

Libanius, *On the Dancers*, undoubtedly influenced by Lucian, says (117), "Every dancer is an Egyptian Proteus on a small scale." He speaks of the dancer's mimetic activity as a changing of form, and says (56) that it is inspired by the gods, who themselves assume different shapes. Certainly Lucian and Libanius are much given to metaphor; still, the whole question deserves some thought.

Scaliger, in his *De Comoedia et Tragoedia*, remarks (1535 a) that the Greek dance known as the *morphasmos*, composed of many figures, "Protei mutationes referebat." He goes on to equate it (wrongly, I believe) with the alphabet dance, the *stoicheia*. Meursius (*Orchestra*, s.v. *morphasmos*) quotes Speusippus' comparison of the dancer Panarete with the "Pharian Proteus," and identifies the dance in question with the *morphasmos*, mentioned by Pollux (4.103) and Atheneus (14.629f.).

The story of Proteus is a familiar one. He is an Egyptian king (or a Greek sea-divinity) who, when seized, changes into flame, water, and a variety of animals, one after the other; but if his assailant holds him fast, Proteus resumes his own shape and foretells the future. Scholars have discussed at great length problems implicit in the legend. The possibility that rituals to Egyptian therianthropic deities had something to do with it (cf. Lucian 59; Diodorus 1.62) has been disputed. The connection with Egypt is sometimes attributed to a confusion with the Phoenician fish-god Dagon, whose shrine at Memphis Greek visitors ascribed to Proteus, sometimes to a confusion with the Egyptian title "Prouti," which was given to kings. Roscher (*Ausführliches Lexikon der griechischen und römischen Mythologie*, Leipzig 1902-9, s.v. *Proteus*) summarizes the literary evidence, and concludes that, in spite of the Egyptian element in the legend, Proteus was essentially Greek, and probably Chalcidian, a sea daimon, changing as the sea changes, and wise as befits all sea divinities.

Nevertheless, the tradition of an Egyptian king called Proteus, of Pharos or Memphis, who changed his form at will, and who possessed the gift of prophecy, is an ancient and persistent one in Greek literature from the *Odyssey* on down. A similar being, sometimes called Cetes, is located in other parts of the ancient world—in Thessaly, for example, or Thrace, or Macedonia, or in the Carpathian Sea. Of Thetis, too, a story of metamorphoses is told.

It seems to me that in this strange legend we probably have a combination of several elements; and that one of those elements may well be, as Lucian suspected, an old ritual dance, perhaps to a sea or river divinity, in which a prominent individual, or a priest, or a priest-king, portrayed mimetically (and spectacularly) a sequence of ideas such as "lion," "fire," "serpent," "water," etc. This dance may have been developed

spontaneously in many different parts of the ancient world. We know that such dances are common to all primitive races.¹ They are offered to divinities of all sorts, and they are invariably accompanied by an illusion of spiritual "possession" or identification of the dancer with a god or with the animal or thing portrayed.

The Greek *morphasmos* goes back to prehistoric times. Centuries later, Aeschylus probably used it in his satyr play, *Proteus*; he was, we recall, much interested in the dance (*Athenaeus* 1.21 e,f). By the time of Lucian, Athenaeus, and Pollux, the *morphasmos* had become chiefly a "funny" dance imitative of animals; and the larger function of imitation in general had been taken over by the newer, more sophisticated pantomimic dance of the theater.

There is every possibility that the earliest Greek travelers found in Egypt a dance very like their own. Egyptian kings, or priests acting for them, danced spiritedly before their gods on solemn occasions. David's dance in II Samuel 6.5-20 was probably of Egyptian origin. We know that Egyptian dances frequently consisted of a series of figures or "pictures." We have a representation of a dance called "the wind," in which dancers represent, according to the superscription, "All things lie under thy feet"; and a third in which men apparently portray cranes. We know also that the dances of Egyptian kings were characterized by high leaps (suggestive of tongues of flame), by whirlings, and even by ecstasy and spiritual possession.²

REVIEWS

The Hymn to Demeter and Her Sanctuary at Eleusis. By GEORGE EMMANUEL MYLONAS. xii, 99 pages, 2 folded plans, 3 figures. Washington University, St. Louis 1942 (Washington University Studies, New Series, Language and Literature, No. 13) \$1

This is a monograph on certain minor details of the topography of Eleusis which illustrate a scholarly method of major scope for Homeric studies. The Homeric hymn to Demeter recounts the *ιερὸς λόγος* of the goddess' visit to Eleusis: modern excavation has uncovered and minutely studied the material remains of the Eleusinian sanctuary for which that myth was told. Professor Mylonas has collated these two categorically disparate sources, producing an archaeological

¹Max von Böhn, *Der Tanz* (Wegweis, Berlin 1925), 12-6; Curt Sachs, *World History of the Dance* (Norton, New York 1937), 77-85 et passim.

²On the Egyptian dance see Irene Lexova, *Ancient Egyptian Dances* (Oriental Institute, Praha 1935); Herman Kees, *Der Opfer Tanz des ägyptischen Königs* (Hinrichs, Leipzig 1912); Sachs, 228-32; Fritz Wege, *Der Tanz in der Antike* (Niemeyer, Halle 1926), 19-29.

It is evident that a ritual dance such as we have posited would require unusual mimetic skill, and also the ability to pass into a trance. Three or four famous dancers possessing those qualifications, some native to Greece, some to Egypt, may have been "telescoped" in the popular version of the story. Incidentally, the connection between possession and prophecy is a close one; and in the Greek form of the dance, at least, the grasping of a possessed dancer by another person, to induce him to prophesy before the divine spirit had left him, would be entirely understandable.

It is interesting to note the insistent mention of Memphis in the Greek legend. The name of that city is constantly associated with the dance, and indeed is sometimes given as a nickname to skilled dancers (cf. *Athenaeus* 1.20 c,d,f; ironically in *Anth. Pal.* 2.38). Ptah, chief god of the city, frequently manifests himself as the Apis-Bull, to whom dances are offered. Also, the famous mysteries of Memphis consisted in part of dancing.

The concept of the dancer as one who "transforms" himself is by no means exclusively an ancient one; witness Isadora Duncan, *My Life* (Liveright, New York 1933), 95 on Loie Fuller

Before our very eyes she turned to many colored, shining orchids, to a wavering, flowing sea flower, and at length to a spiral-like lily. . . . She became fluid; she became light; she became color and flame.

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commentary to the hymn. Since he is most accurately informed about every detail of the recent excavations on the site, he writes with archaeological authority—and also, fortunately, with great lucidity and logic. He succeeds in locating on the modern archaeological plan all the chief landmarks mentioned in the hymn and in dispelling, without trace of malice, several current scholarly prejudices. He demonstrates that it is possible to be a renowned antiquary without being able to multiply 16 by 7½ correctly, and he successfully disagrees with some learned and well-known scholars by being a little more careful in his reasoning and considerably better informed in his archaeology. Probably his readers will gratefully accept most of his conclusions, provided they belong to the large group of those who can accept the fundamental methodological premise on which everything else rests.

This fundamental premise is briefly and adequately formulated by the author in the closing chapter of his monograph:

The author of the hymn had in mind, and it has been proved that he was describing, conditions existing at Eleusis during the Mycenaean or Late Helladic Age. Therefore, the evidence which he has preserved for us in his verses can be used with confidence as a guide to the remote architectural history of Eleusis.

Here is a tenet familiar to Homeric scholars, one which is sometimes assumed as an incontestable axiom, but more often promulgated with conviction so intense as to wither every brash opponent. Yet it is patently false, and constitutes the greatest present-day obstacle to progress in Homeric studies.

We encounter this tenet on every Homeric site on which the excavator has set his camp; but it riots most naturally and most luxuriantly on the plain of Troy, where every advance in archaeological penetration is accepted as identical with an advance in our understanding of the Iliad. Yet surely it is only elementary logic to argue that no material spade can ever excavate the Troy of the Iliad! Our exploration of Late Helladic culture is a genuine recapture of the material realities of the late second millennium before Christ in the Aegean region; but for that very reason it is not an increase in comprehension of the Greek epic, except in so far as that epic is itself an accurate account of that civilization—and this is precisely what has to be proved before it can be assumed. No one takes Aeschylus as an authority on the topography and monuments of prehistoric Mycenae, because we are too vividly aware of the gap between the fifth century B.C. and the Age of Agamemnon. Yet Homer is supposed to offer accurate information about this period, even though Homer may have lived much closer to Aeschylus than to Agamemnon and been separated from the Mycenaean world by centuries without any bridge of written chronicles. And to Homer's archaeological ignorance of the past (which must have been profound in comparison with, for example, Professor Blegen's information about Helladic culture) must be added the oral poet's professional indifference to archaeological truth. The geographical accuracy which is often so amazing in Homer was derived from the poet's own environment, whereas remote historical accuracy was not similarly a part of his contemporary world. When Professor Mylonas very prettily proves that Euripides, in staging his *Hiketides*, presupposes the Eleusis of *his own day*, Periclean telesterion and all, in spite of the dramatic setting in the Helladic times of Theseus, he gives (for me) the coup de grace to any assumption that Greek poets worried about the archaeological details of a world already long vanished from all men's ken. Or will anyone demand of the Ion of Euripides that it conform accurately to the architectural verities of Delphi in proto-Helladic times? We all know that Euripides set his youthful hero as an acolyte in a very Hellenic temple. Yet somehow Homer is supposed to have behaved quite differently from other Greek poets.

Of course, no one imagines that the author of the Homeric hymn to Demeter had direct telepathic access to Late Helladic Eleusis or even (I dare hope) to written accounts and descriptions of the place; but it is presumed that this hymn was not wholly a new creation so

much as a living descendant of earlier oral narratives, ultimately deriving from those distant days when its action was fabled to have taken place. Yet the story of Demeter is a myth and must therefore always have been projected into some remoter past, since the goddess' visit to Eleusis could never actually have occurred in the flesh and blood of any historical present; and to assume that the telling of this myth settled itself on the more or less contemporary actualities of Late Helladic III and thenceforth correctly perpetuated the material topography of the Eleusis of that epoch, is not to deal in axioms or even in probabilities. Oral poetic tradition, with its improvisations and assimilations and irresponsibility to other than poetic laws, works according to a mentality about as antithetic to scientific archaeological behavior as anything that could be imagined. Whoever delves in Homer must consider the *Chanson de Roland*, *Nibelungenlied*, *Beowulf*, and *Morte d'Arthur* as at least equally cogent guides (despite the confusions, metamorphoses, and anachronisms) as the meticulously accurate information derived from the stratigraphical excavation of an actual Greek site. And thus it happens that Professor Mylonas' impressive archaeological knowledge of the topography and architectural monuments of Eleusis over a span of some two thousand years might well serve to determine the critical date of composition of the Homeric hymn to Demeter; but to invert the process and make the hymn a source of information about the topography of the Eleusinian sanctuary *not in the lifetime of the hymn's composer, but for the period during which the myth which it recounts is supposed to have taken place*, perhaps more than six hundred years earlier, is to ask the impossible of epic oral poetry.

None the less, the experiment should be tried, if only to see how it comes out; and for this experiment I know no scholar better fitted than George Mylonas.

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Teachers' Pay in Ancient Greece. By CLARENCE A. FORBES. 60 pages. University of Nebraska, Lincoln 1942 (University of Nebraska Studies in the Humanities, No. 2) \$0.75

This study should be of interest to all teachers, for it is concerned with an important material factor in the history of teaching. It seeks to reveal what answers ancient Greece (the world of Greek culture from earliest historical times down into the sixth century A.D.) gave to three questions which were first asked when the sophists charged fees for instruction: "Should teachers be paid? and why? and how much?" (5).

The subject is treated in fourteen chapters, besides a brief Preface (5), Selected Bibliography (9-10), and Terminology (10): Chapter I, Earliest Examples (11):

Charondas and Zeno of Elea; Chapter II, The First Sophistic (12-9): chiefly Protagoras, Prodicus, Gorgias, Hippias of Elis, Socrates, Plato, and Isocrates; Chapter III, The Schools of Oratory (20-2): Isocrates; Chapter IV, The Philosophers (23-8): Academics, Peripatetics, Cynics, Stoics, Epicureans; Chapter V, Elementary Teachers (29-32): paedagogus, paidotribes, grammatices, et al. and elementary education in the Hellenistic period; Chapter VI, The Grammatici (33-4); Chapter VII, Teachers of Technical and Special Subjects (35-8): gymnastes, teachers of medicine, sophronistai, hoplomachos, etc.; Chapter VIII, The Training of Slaves and Apprentices (39-40): evidence from Roman Egypt; Chapter IX, The Philosophers under the Empire (41-2): Lucian and the Stoics; Chapter X, The Second Sophistic (43-5): evidence from Philostratus' Lives of the Sophists; Chapter XI, Imperial Patronage and Public Salaries (46-9): Vespasian, Hadrian, Antoninus Pius, Severus Alexander, Constantius Chlorus, Diocletian, Constantine, Gratian, Theodosius, Athalaric, Justinian; Chapter XII, The University of Athens (50-1): Antoninus Pius, Marcus Aurelius, Justinian; Chapter XIII, The Minor Universities (52-7): Libanius, Constantinople, Antioch, Alexandria, Rome; Chapter XIV, Reluctance in Payment (58-60). A better summary is impossible because of the nature of the material—anecdotes, facts, and figures, collected from well over sixty sources, ranging in date from Aristophanes to Suidas.

The questions "Should teachers be paid? and why?" are discussed chiefly in Chapters II, III, IV, and IX: statements on the amount of pay teachers received appear throughout the paper. The average reader who knows something about the sophists, Socrates, Isocrates, and the various schools of philosophy will, I believe, enjoy reading the chapters noted above; but in most of the other chapters he will find the going hard. I missed (1) some exact summary of the relation of the teachers and professors of various subjects to one another, to the educational practices of their times, and to Greek education as a whole; (2) comprehensive statements regarding the position each teacher held in contemporary society and the buying power of the pay which he received. (In the one instance [48] where equivalents of the value of teachers' pay are given in American money, the gold standard is used.) Also I wondered what the difference was between a *paidotribes* and a *gymnastes*, a *rhetor* and a *rhetor*, a professor of oratory and a professor of rhetoric, a *grammaticus* and a *grammatices*. A great job of assembling evidence has been done; the presentation of that evidence, however, might have been made more smooth in many places, unless the author intended his study merely as a work of reference. In this case an index should have been added.

Several other, more particular points attracted my at-

tention. Is it consistent to follow the German practice of writing all nouns, wherever they occur, with capitals, and then to give the title of an English book thus: "Greek ideals and modern life"? Evidence of doubtful value is used in a confusing fashion in the text on pages 11, 14, 21, and 29. On pages 24, 25, and 41, spurious letters are relied upon for evidence though no explanation of their reliability is given. On pages 5 and 10 different dates of publication (1909, 1910) are given for Walden's *The Universities of Ancient Greece*. Is Charondas correctly dated in the "eighth century" on page 11? Note 39, page 28, should read "(see p. 25)." Note 12, page 48, gives Frank's *Economic History of Rome* credit for computations originating in *The Common People of Ancient Rome* by F. F. Abbott (Scribner's, New York 1911), 162. Should Marcus Aurelius be called a "philosopher-king" (50)?

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Virgil, Aeneid VI. Edited with Introduction and Commentary by FRANK FLETCHER. xxxi, 111 pages. Oxford at the Clarendon Press; Oxford University Press, New York 1941 \$1.25

This book was edited for "readers and students who, whatever their age or attainments, have enough knowledge of Latin to approach Virgil and wish to be enabled to study, understand, and enjoy his greatest work without constant recourse to books of reference." It contains, therefore, in addition to the text, the literary and philosophical sources of Aeneid VI (ix-xxviii), the story of Aeneid I-V (xxix-xxx), a Note on the Manuscripts (27-8), Commentary (29-102), two Appendices containing a translation from Iliad Ψ of the funeral of Patroclus (103) and a summary of Odyssey λ of the visit of Odysseus to Hades (104-6), and an excursus on The Virgilian Hexameter (107-11). Let us comment on each of these sections in their respective order.

In the text (1-26) no vowels are marked, no differentiation is made between the vocalic and the consonantal *i*, there is no vocabulary (here or elsewhere in the book), no compendium of Latin grammar is given, there are no illustrations, and the commentary is remote from the text.

Into twenty pages the editor compresses his comprehensive study of the sources of Aeneid VI. He stresses, with conciseness, Virgil's indebtedness not only to Homer, Lucretius, Ennius and Cicero, but also that to Orphism and the 'Mysteries' known through Pindar and Plato, to legends and folklore of Greece and Italy, and to Stoic philosophy. Several myths seldom read by the high-school pupil are summarized.

The story of the earlier books of the Aeneid serves

the double purpose of informing those who have not read these books and of reviewing the details for those who have forgotten. Special emphasis is laid upon those passages needed for the understanding of the Sixth Book.

In his note on the four relevant manuscripts, the editor states that he has followed the Oxford Classical Text edited by Hirtzel, with a few alterations of punctuation and nine readings which he lists:

In verse 96 *quam* of the MSS replaces *qua*; in 141 *quis* of the others replaces *qui* of the Medicean; in 177 *sepulcri* is preferred over *sepulcro*; in 203 *gemina* is taken from the other MSS instead of *geminae* of the Roman; in 300 *flammea* replaces *flamma*; in 528 *additur* appears instead of *additus* on equivalent authority; in 664 *aliquos* is accepted from the MSS over *alios* of a corrector; in 852 *paci* of the best MSS replaces *pacis*, while

ABSTRACTS OF ARTICLES

This department is conducted by Dr. Charles T. Murphy of Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey. Correspondence concerning abstracts may be addressed to him.

ANCIENT AUTHORS

Boethius. KARL BÜCHNER. *Bemerkungen zum Text der Consolatio Philosophiae des Boethius.* 90,19 (Weinberger)—igitur is used in the sense of 'now.' 100,8—remordet needs no ablative of means supplied, but is used absolutely for 'bite again and again.' alios duris agitari is emended alios duris agitat. 92,26—nihil is deleted. 28,16—delete pudore. 83,15—strike out the first idem. 105,2—delete vel before sunt. 12,6—retain the second tamen. 24,10—ut cum is not pleonastic, but the cum is a gloss in the manuscript. 68,13—the sentence quare sic quoque sola quaeritur beatudo is an interpolation. 92,11—for caecos read caeco. 36,24—for qua read quas. 100,14—read saeculis for saeculi. 57,25—read tortorem for tortores. 106,21—despite the manuscript reading, caelum is preferable to caelo. 100,20—read malum or male, not malo, meritos. 5,11—read glomerantur nubila (Schrader's conjecture), not sidera, Coro. 23,3—read tristis for suis. 39,11ff.—add et before veniens in the line, Phoebus, extremo veniens ab ortu. 56,17—proxima is retained as the lectio difficilior, rather than maxima. 85,11—read captos, not captus. 86,20—read omnium malorum extremo, not extremum, for extremo is closer to the manuscript reading. 94,9—after carcer supply nex, not lex. 122,10—emend patefecit to patefecerit. These notes are felt to have a unity in so far as they furnish a clearer judgment of the archetypes of our manuscripts.

H 75 (1940) 279-97 (Kirk)

Herodotus. EDWARD S. FORSTER. *Trees and Plants in Herodotus.* Herodotus' interest in trees and plants is "solely from the economic point of view of their usefulness in man's daily life." From this point of view the sixty references may be classified as follows: cereals; vegetables; fruit-trees; trees and plants producing oils and fats; spices, aromatic plants, and gums; dye; fibres and textiles; trees; other plants and shrubs. CR 56 (1942) 57-63 (F. Jones)

— J. MELKMAN. *Labyrintus.* Comparing the passages in which Herodotus mentions a Labyrintus (1.74, 77, 188), the impossible relationship results:

in 900 *limite* of a few MSS stands in the place of the reading of all the best MSS, *litore*.

The Commentary is by far the outstanding feature of the book. Couched in language comprehensible to the high-school senior, it gives not only all the information necessary to him but much that will satisfy the literary thirst of even an arid scholar. The manifold allusions, quotations, and explanations, together with occasional translations which rely strongly on Servius, Henry or English verse translators, admirably fulfill the purpose of the book. A long note on the Cumæan cave (50-2) is particularly valuable.

The last section, the excursus on the hexameter, explains succinctly the scansion of 'the stateliest measure ever moulded by the lips of man.'

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Labyrintus II is the son of Labyrintus I and the fabled queen Nitocris. Solution: Nebuchadnezzar and Nitocris are one and the same person. In all three passages Labyrintus is to be identified with the Babylonian king Nabonidus.

Mn 9 (1940) 105-11

(Plumpe)

Livy. R. L. DUNBAIN. *Notes on Livy, Book XXIII.* In 24.7-9 the Gauls who destroyed a Roman army by bringing down upon it a series of trees whose trunks had previously been partly cut through employed a device familiar to Tasmanian axemen. Livy, however, did not express himself exactly, for both 'impulsae . . . impellunt' and 'oram extremae silvae' give an incorrect idea of what must have happened. (2) In 32.14 frumenta can denote only standing crops in the field and not, as Peskett takes it, the previous year's harvest. "What is meant is that farmers in districts within Hannibal's reach had to cut their crops for hay and cart that hay into the fortified towns before 1 June." (3) In 32.14 the 'subliciae' are "uprights or posts which stood on the top of the wall and on which the tower was built."

CR 56 (1942) 69-70

(F. Jones)

Plato. W. B. STANFORD. Alcibiades' Lisp. *Σειρήνων* in Pl. Symp. 216A involves a pun, since Alcibiades, as was well known, pronounced *ρ* like *λ* and earlier in the conversation (215A) had compared Socrates to a Silenus on a casket.

CR 56 (1942) 72

(F. Jones)

Plautus. O. SKUTSCH. *Notes on the Pseudolus of Plautus.* (1) In 27 'tabellis' cannot be an ablative, as Leo and Lindsay seem to take it; 544a may be satisfactorily retained by removing *cum*. (2) The crux in 1203f. can be resolved by emending 'meditatus malest' to 'meditate malust'; 'nequam est' is thus accounted for as a gloss on 'malust.' (3) Substituting the unsyncopated form, avides, for audes in Simo's question (1322) would give point to Pseudolus' answer: non me dices avidum esse hominem. Other Plautine lines in which the unsyncopated form would seem to be better are Rudens 538, 646, and Amph. 985.

CR 56 (1942) 66-8

(F. Jones)

Seneca. A. C. COSMAN. *Seneca De Clementia I, 3.5.* Read "volaturi (for *tvoluntarii*) subsiluimus"="we have taken a jump to fly."

Mn 9 (1940) 111

(Plumpe)